

# PAINTINGS OF THE PEOPLE



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July 1999 Vol. 6 No. 7

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# Our Voice

the spare change magazine

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**Back to School for Debbie**



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communicating about their  
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## Changing the language! Hiding the issues?

by Dale Ladouceur

*Human Resources n.pl. 1. people, esp. personnel or workers, as a significant asset of a business, organisation, etc. 2. the department in a business, organization, etc. which deals with the hiring, training, management, etc. of employees.*



**Clint Dunford.**  
**Minister of ambiguous**  
**new department.**

Jonson's new ministry "Health and Wellness". "Family and Social Services" would now be sandwiched in between such 'related' departments as "Career Development" and "Labour".

"The department will be looking at how best to put various areas together to serve people the best way possible," says Alberta government spokesperson Donna Babchishin. "The areas that are involved are career development, that includes a number of programs that help people upgrade in the workplace, includes a lot of the career centres throughout the province that offer people tips and information as well." Babchishin adds, "Those are some of the issues with supporting people, helping them get into the work-force and helping them get the training to improve their work situation. Its moving it to a department that's focused on a number of people issues, helping them develop their potential".

When asked if this means that people who are in a state of accepting welfare, like single mothers, haven't reached their potential Babchishin was defensive, "Helping them reach their potential sometimes means helping to provide the support that they need in whatever way that is."

"Well obviously they have used these new labels and what these labels really mean are not fooling anybody," states Raj Pannu. "Given their previous track record, their

This is how Websters 1999 dictionary defines Human Resources and some are saying this is also how the Alberta government has chosen to deal with the less fortunate. In late May the Alberta government decided to do some restructuring. One of the major changes the Klein government made was to totally eliminate terms like "Social Services", "Welfare", and "Developmental Disabilities" from the main organisational structure of government.

AISH recipients, persons with developmental disabilities and Michener Centre would now fall under Halvar

intention, clearly is to obliterate the language first and then remove from our minds, the need for social assistance and social services for people who are in need, for people who are helpless, people who are suffering from illness or disability or extreme poverty. They need a social safety net and security"

Likening it to the limited language used to control the masses in the prophetic book 1984, (George Orwell), Pannu freely attacks the new Alberta government structure. "The government, in my view, is very clever. They're not just bringing in new policies and drawing social programs which are their to help those who need help - in any society we will have a certain number of those, but they are also trying to invent a new language and take away from us the tools, in the longer run, of being able to think in ways which this government doesn't approve of. The language that they are inventing is a very, very interesting exercise.

"They seem determined to proceed along those lines. They want to, I guess with this new generation, hope that there will be no memory about how things were."



**Raj Pannu - ND MLA and Social Services advocate**

When asked how something defined as part of a corporate structure could begin to address the various needs of people that fall under Social Services, Babchishin was stock in responding. "I think that the department is called Human Resources and Employment and all those programs that were currently in existence will continue to be in existence and there will always be programs for people in need."

Pannu was less than optimistic, "I don't know the details of how this is going to be handled, we'll have to wait and see how things unfold but the general intention, their ideology, is quite familiar to us. We know what their intentions would be because we know the way they think about the world and what their vision of a good society is. It's a society where there is lots of inequality, in which no one cares about their next door neighbour, and where the poor and the weak are left to fend for themselves - perish. That's their vision against the broad vision that we have to look at. The brave new world of the Tories and the Reformers will be the only world that the new generation will conceive of. That will be the reality."

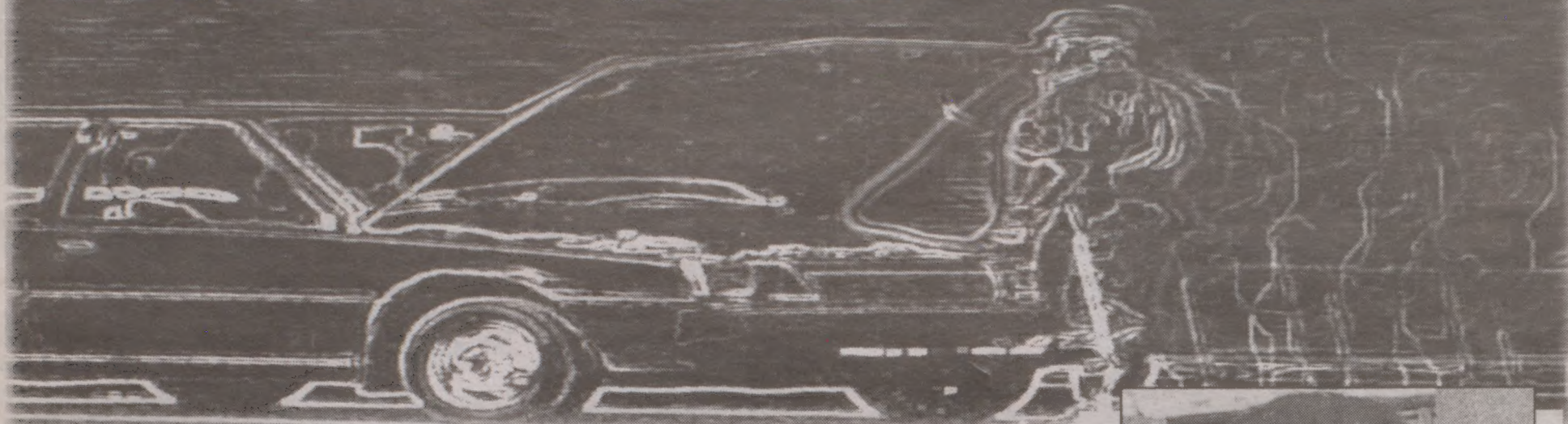
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# The roadside rescue



By Donna LaPretre

I was traveling east on Highway 16 on a Sunday morning. I was half listening to the radio as I was deeply engrossed in my own little world thinking about the three days that I would get to spend with my husband. He was serving time in the Saskatchewan Penitentiary in Prince Albert. We hadn't had a conjugal visit in two years and I was very much focused on the opportunity to spend some quality time with him.

When I pulled out of Maidstone, Saskatchewan, my car, a 1991 Toyota Tercel, died. As I drifted over to the side of the highway I was in shock that this wonderfully reliable, little car was letting me down at a time when I needed it most! I got out, lifted the hood, checked the oil and looked around, not having a clue what I was looking for. I stood there for awhile but nobody would stop. I was beginning to panic because it was a very cold and windy day and I wasn't exactly dressed for the outdoors.

Standing around wasn't working. It became clear to me that I was a 60 year old woman now, not a cute 20 year old anymore who could bat her eyes and stop traffic. How depressing! I got back in my car and prayed. Nothing else was working! The longer I sat, the more depressed I got. What was I going to do? I had to get to Prince Albert for this visit. I'd waited long enough for it and I wasn't about to let my husband down who I knew would be waiting anxiously and nervously for my arrival.

A man in a van suddenly appeared. He'd been heading the other direction and turned back to see if he could help. He handed me his card which said 'J.A. (Joe) MacLeod, Mayor, Town of Cudworth'.

Joe tried everything he knew to do, all of which didn't work. He finally offered to take me to the nearest restaurant to see if we could round up a mechanic or somebody that might know more about cars. He told me to stay in the van and get warm while he tried to recruit someone. A few minutes later he came out with two brothers. Joe left me in good hands, said goodbye and good luck, and was on his way.

The two brothers, one of them named Adrian, now came to my rescue. They told me to go into the restaurant and have a coffee while they tried to see if they could figure out what was wrong with my car. They had no luck. Adrian had a cell phone which he suggested I use to try to call friends. Unfortunately everyone was too far away to be of any assistance. While we tried to figure out what I should do, Adrian spotted the

mechanic going into the shop, obviously to do some work on his own car. The two brothers took off to go talk to him. They came back to tell me the mechanic would take a look at my car for me and left me to keep warm while they towed my car to the service station.

They could have handed me over to the mechanic and left but they chose not to desert me. It looked like these poor guys were going to hang in until the bitter end.

My brief glimpse of hope evaporated as the mechanic, Trevor, informed me that it was the timing belt and he didn't have one to fit in stock. He and Adrian got on their phones and started calling all the places they knew of in Lloydminster to see if anyone had a timing belt to fit my car. Adrian was even willing to drive all the way back to Lloydminster to pick it up if they could find one and Trevor was willing to stay at the shop and fix it. Being a Sunday, a timing belt couldn't be found anywhere. They all looked at me with compassion as they ran out of possibilities. Being the well-adjusted, sensible woman I am, I burst into tears! Adrian's brother said, "Don't worry, things will work out". But I couldn't see how.

I decided I had no choice but to hitchhike. I got my bags out of the car and said goodbye to my new-found friends. Adrian and his brother wished me luck; Trevor assured me he would have the car fixed when I came through on my way back home and promised to keep an eye on me until I got a ride. So, off I went across the highway, put my luggage down and my thumb out.

I had already realised I wouldn't get a ride because I was "young and cute" but I thought that alternatively, maybe I'd get a ride because I was "old". Surely someone would recognise that I wasn't your "run-of-the-mill" hitch-hiker and that I was a little old for this stuff. Not to mention that I was freezing to death out there. However, after what seemed to me to be an interminable wait, a nice young man, not much older than my own son, stopped to give me a lift. He was going to Saskatoon. I was going to Prince Albert. He introduced himself as Ken Ricketts.

Ken was a very interesting man. He asked me what on earth I was doing hitch-hiking. I told him my sad story. As we neared the Battlefords, where I usually branched off to head north, he said he would take me to the Bus Depot to see if there were any buses. There weren't. In fact, the depot was closed. He decided he couldn't just



Writer and prisoner's rights activist Donna LaPretre

leave me stranded and said he was taking me all the way to Prince Albert, saying it was only a few minutes out of his way. More like a couple of hours.

Safely in Prince Albert, I gave Ken my card and told him to give me a call when he was in Edmonton and I'd give him a home-cooked meal. I offered to pay for some gas but he refused. We said good-bye, my friends picked me up and I was feeling mightily relieved to be safe and sound and looking forward to three days with my husband, a visit that was worth the 2-year wait as well as my hitch-hiking experience.

I returned to Maidstone by bus and true to his word, Trevor had my car fixed, ready for me, and at a very reasonable price. Even reasonable for me, but my daughter had given me her credit card "just so I know you'll be okay if you run into any problems". Wait until she heard about this escapade!

Back home, a few months later, Ken took me at my word and called me. He came over for supper. We laughed as Ken recalled the shock of seeing a woman his mother's age standing by the side of the road and his decision to take me all the way to Prince Albert because he couldn't imagine his mother hitch-hiking. Somebody had to take care of us old folks that still thought we were teenagers!

Looking back now, I can laugh at the look on the faces of people that went whizzing past me in their cars; looks of horror at this senior citizen with her thumb out. I guess it did look mighty funny. In retrospect, what started out as a nightmare, I now see as a blessing for the wonderful new friends I made. There are still some good people in the world. ♦



Where are they now?



## Where are Doug and Mary?

by Kas

**D**oug and Mary met seven and a half years ago. They lived together for about a year and were on social services at the time. Then came the day when Doug found a job window washing. Shortly after that they found a rooming house to manage. Within a few months they had the whole main floor as their home. This gave them three bedrooms, a kitchen, a dining room and a living room. They were doing well. At this point Mary got pregnant. Things were good.

But then Doug lost his job just before his son was born. Within weeks of their son's birth they decided to go back on Social Services.

With their son less than a month old, Social Services told Doug he had to take one of their courses. The only problem was that Doug and Mary lived downtown and the course was on Calgary Trail by White mud drive way in south Edmonton.

He had to take the bus every day, but with such a limited cheque there was no money beyond food. He called his worker and asked for some travel allowance, but they told him it was included in the cheque so he would have to walk the more than seventy blocks. One morning he was late and was told that he and his family were to be cut off assistance and would not be eligible for another three years.

The family needed money for gas, power, and food, not to mention baby diapers and formula because Mary could not breast feed.

Doug tried working temporary jobs for awhile, but each month their bills were going unpaid. This was not good and it began to cause Doug and Mary to fight a lot. Out of desperation Doug decided to try dealing pot. That went well for a while, but then he got busted. In the long run it cost Doug his family. He had faith that it would work out, but he lost Mary and his son.

The last time I talked to Doug, him and Mary were talking a lot on the phone. He was hopeful that they would get back together. I have not talked to him in about a year, but I hope that things worked out for him and his family.

(Next month, Kas will share the story of Tom and Patty and tell us Where They Are Now!)

## BILL S-11 DEFEATED

By Donna LaPrete

Bill S-11 introduced in the Senate by Senator Erminie J. Cohen and sponsored by tory MP Dianne St. Jacques in June 1998, was recently defeated in the House of Commons by a vote of 160-101. Bill S-11 is an Act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act in order to add "social condition" as a prohibited ground of discrimination replacing Section 2 with:

"The purpose of this Act is to extend the laws in Canada to give effect, within the purview of matters coming within the legislative authority of Parliament, to the principle that every individual should have an equal opportunity with other individuals to make for himself or herself the life that he or she is able and wishes to have, consistent with his or her duties and obligations as a member of society, without being hindered in or prevented from doing so by discriminatory practices based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, "social condition", disability or conviction for an offense for which a pardon has been granted."

Subsection 3(1) of the Act would be replaced by the following:

"For all purposes of this Act, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, "social condition", disability and conviction for which a pardon has been granted are prohibited grounds of discrimination."

Human rights activists have, for years, been lobbying to have the words "social condition" included in the Charter of Human Rights. It is their belief the addition of this wording would eliminate "poor bashing" and discrimination against people in poverty.

Liz Sutherland of NAPO (National Anti-Poverty Organization) in Ottawa advised that "the Bill made it through the senate and the second reading in the House of Commons however a few days before the third reading, Justice Minister Anne McClellan announced the overhaul of the Canadian Human Rights Act. Justice Minister McClellan said she wouldn't support the Bill because she preferred to see the Human Rights Act reviewed in it's entirety. This decision gave an excuse to vote against Bill S-11.

"On a positive note", Liz said, "the Minister of Justice has been promising a review for the last 10 years so there is still the possibility 'social condition' may be included in the amendments. It is interesting to note that the Board appointed by the Minister to review the Canadian Human Rights Act has no representation from low-income people. NAPO, however, will be involved in the consultations."

Opposition to Bill S-11 was, for the most part, based on the ambiguous meaning of the wording "social condition". The intention of this legislation is good but is not clearly enough defined for a unanimous vote of approval in order to make it law. The Bill might have had a better chance of being accepted if it had included the words "economic status" rather than "social condition", according to some.

## Response to last months Last Word.

"Do you think it should be illegal for someone in need to ask you for money on the street?"

I work at the Wee Book Inn on Whyte Ave and I often find it a pleasure to give someone some spare change and I think they have every right to be where they are and to ask for help and I think what you guys are doing is great so keep up the good work.

Becky

I feel that I get approached more and more by people on Whyte Avenue than I ever did before, but it's ridiculous to make it illegal. That does not solve the problem, the problems are societal problems that we as citizens all have to take responsibility for, in terms of who we vote for but more importantly looking at how we value someone. Because someone is poor, it should not be illegal for them to talk to us or ask us for a hand out. They are just as worthy of space on the street as someone who has wealth.

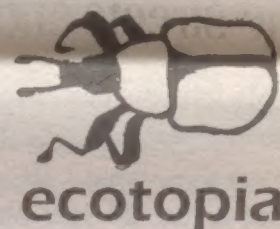
Dawn M.

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**Talking Back**

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**A different kind of summer camp**



by James Rowe

**A**n activist's life is not always pleasant. There are strange hours, oodles of stress, and the walk to work is uphill both ways. Fortunately at the end of the day there is always the handsome paycheck to relish in. Well there ain't that either. Why then do people devote hour upon hour to selected causes? Because they are selfish! Activism is a very rewarding pursuit. Many of activism's personal and social benefits will be explored this summer at Ecotopia 99, a 10 day (Aug 10-19) environmental youth camp being organised by the EcoCity society. The camp will be centred at Camp Meywasin on Lake Wabamum, but activities will be held all over the Edmonton community.

Ecotopia aims to create a positive, inspiring and empowering setting for Alberta's youth to discuss environmental issues, but most importantly, to learn the skills necessary to affect positive change. The camp will be a mix of tours, workshops, hands-on activities, and good old-fashioned fun. The cost of the ten day event is \$50.00 which will cover all food, lodging & transportation costs for the duration of the camp. For more information and to get a registration package, or to volunteer phone Jessica @ (780) 429-3659 The camp is open to all youth between the ages of 16-22.

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## Art a way of healing

I didn't put my hope in it  
not even for a moment.  
I didn't trust it, not even by a hair.  
Still I, Lalla, drank the wine of my own sayings.  
Yet, then I seized an inner darkness,  
I brought it down,  
I tore it and cut it to pieces.

Above is a poem written by Lalla Kashmiri in the fourteenth century. To me its meaning is relatively obvious. She is a person skeptical of her feelings, but still able to express those feelings to herself, still able to accept them, although perhaps begrudgingly. She has used her words, her sayings, to examine herself, to go inside of her darkness as she says, to bring it down and to tear and cut it to pieces.

Here in the community where **Our Voice** is published, we see the poem of Lalla Kashmiri personified by the life that works, lives and struggles among us. One of the most powerful needs of people is the need for self-expression. It is a need that involves more than telling someone how you feel. It is a process of self-awareness, self-discovery and finding the courage to be honest about the darkness and imperfection which lurks some-

where inside each and every one of us. For people who are poor and often feel voiceless and powerless, expression usually comes with more agony and it is harder to determine a trust through which they can share the truths of their souls. Fortunately for many there is artistic expression. There is poetry, there is writing of all varieties, there is painting and old guitars.

From the old Coffee House Open Stages in the drop-in of the Bissell Centre, to the Songs of the Street poetry nights and anthologies, to Flo Pastoor's Art From the Unknown, to Linda Dumont's inner city talent shows and advocacy for the arts, there is a place for people to define their feelings, to seek answers to their troubles within their own creations.

Art is a way for people to understand themselves, their lives, their families and their communities. Art is a way for them to communicate misery, joy, fear, love, hate with their own sculpted hands and minds. And at the end of it all, for many people, it is a way for them to heal themselves, to stare themselves down and rebuild esteem and confidence.

In today's world, generally I'd say that we have lost the value for art which we once had. In the fast paced world of making money and buying things and looking cool, our society seems to

## Editorial OPINION

### Our Voice the spare change magazine

have less understanding of the importance of art and even self-expression. Art programs are always the first to go when schools cut their budgets or when governments divert funding.

So I feel lucky to work in a community that has maintained a belief in the strength of art, whether it be painting or poetry, as long as it encourages people to express their feelings and make themselves realise that they really are just people, like everyone else.

he sees me  
as nothing  
but a useless poet-  
I owe the man money.

Takuboku, Japanese 1885.

Michael Walters.

## Prejudice and temptation on the streets and off.

My name is Edwin Burke Koe, better known as Sundance on the streets of Edmonton. I'm a Gwitchin Indian from Aklavik, North West Territories. In 1973, I left Aklavik and joined the Canadian Armed Forces. I served and completed a three year term. It was my first time away from home and my first time in the south. When the Army asked me to carry on, I declined. I was given an honourable discharge and I returned home to get back in the way of life I was familiar with. I quickly got back into hunting and fishing as a way of survival.

The south at that time was very cruel and I believe it still is, at least for aboriginal people. At home, in the north, when you walk to the store and happen to see someone, whether they are Indian, Inuit or White, it is customary to say hello and always have a few laughs.

Before my ordeal on the streets here in the south, I used to say hi to people and they would tell me to get a job or get out of here you drunken Indian and so forth. I have a lot of white friends and they tell me that when they ask their own kind for help, they get responses like, "a little down on your luck today, had one too many," and they would be helped beyond belief.

In my life I've experienced a lot of prejudice and I've had to put up with it. I've never been rude except for one time when I asked a fellow why the White man is always sending people into space? You must be trying to find out if the Indians have any land up there too. Makes you wonder.

In the North West Territories we've been waiting for a settlement for the past thirty-five years.

GEE-- TOO BAD OUR ANCESTORS  
DIDN'T THINK OF  
THIS WHEN IT CAME TO  
LAND CLAIMS DISPUTES  
300 YEARS AGO...



Art: Paul Potts 99

They have continued to take our minerals - oil, gas, gold, ore and the government continues to take their sweet time dealing with this. We were always promised, but never honoured.

Many aboriginal people, because of racism and because of lost land and culture, have fallen to the streets and into terrible ways of life.

Eventually I ended up on the streets. I was a drunk for many years. I indulged in my share of drinks. There was Lysol, hairspray, antiseptics and the like.

One night I ended up in a fight in the single men's hostel. My right hand which was aimed at my opponents head, missed and crashed through a six inch by six inch wire mesh window. I tore

three ligaments, two nerves and sliced my artery side open. I can't recall anything after that. I woke up in the Royal Alex Hospital strapped to a bed. My body and arms were tied down. Two months after this ordeal I was on my way to the O'Meara Lodge for alcohol treatment, but I never made it.

Then I met a very beautiful lady who was having similar problems. We decided to get a place together. We found a rooming house near the Royal Alex Hospital. We tried to keep a low profile, but then we started closet drinking again and soon things got out of hand. Everything fell apart and we hit our bottom.

We began taking advantage of the fact that Debbie is white. The drugstores and grocery stores would not sell me any Lysol or hairspray because I am an Indian. But they would sell it to Debbie because she is white.

Then the George Spady Centre sent us to the Kapown Treatment Centre. I suppose you could call that our last straw.

The good news is that we made it through Kapown and realised our creator was watching over us.

My point is that a lot of people helped me on my way to recovery as well as during my drinking days. My own people helped me and white people helped me. A lot of people manipulated me as well, even my own people as well as other races. However the bible tells me that many will tempt me, but it doesn't specify who or what colour. It says many. To me if it happens to be a white person who mistreats me, it doesn't mean all white people are bad. Likewise if it were an Indian person mistreating me, it doesn't mean they're all bad. This goes for any race God put on this earth. We're here to help each other and respect each other.

Sundance



# Canada's immigration injustice

Part two

RODNEY GRAHAM IN WINNIPEG

**A**lthough eighty percent of the world's twenty million refugees are women and children, only thirty percent of Canada's refugee claimants are women. This is according to the Canadian Council of Refugees.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women as well as the federal government's Immigration Review Panel for recommending changes to the immigration laws. They are laws that would make landed status more difficult for women from developing countries.

Among their recommendations the panel would have immigrants prove their proficiency in English or French. Statistics show that over one half of the Chinese immigrants to Canada in the mid 1990's could not speak English. This would put the less fortunate and poorer people from non-white countries at an extreme disadvantage. Other recommendations would demand that so called economic immigrants possess a minimum level of education and highly developed skills.



Von Lau and the last class before government cuts

Many immigrant women are forced to work under the table because of harsh immigration policy. New criteria proposed would force women to submit an income tax return before being granted citizenship. With these stricter measures, even more of the women wanting to enter would be forced into servitude, desperation and the underground because they merely wanted to survive in our country.

**Softhearted and kind?**

In North America we pride ourselves on being softhearted in and kind, to the point of being self righteous, though it appears our history would show otherwise.

In 1908, all Asian immigrants had to possess at least \$200 to enter Canada. Everyone else only had to have \$25. Chinese immigrants, in addition to the required \$200 had to pay the government a tax of an additional \$500, an extraordinarily high amount of money in 1908. At the time this was enough to buy a mansion.

Chinese people were denied entry from 1923 to 1956, with the exception of farm labourers and domestics. Chinese immigration was barred under separate laws from 1923 to 1947.

## Case in Point

Margaret Von Lau came to Canada in 1989 from Poland. She had to prove she and her husband could support their family of four for one year. She had \$15,000. She was accepted because of her high education. She has a law degree and valuable experience in economic management.

Despite her high qualifications, Margaret Von Lau was only able to get work in a furniture factory because only work experience in Canada is acknowledged. She divorced a few years ago because of stress caused by difficulties aggravated by what she believes are tough immigration policies that prevented her from being who she needed to be. She says divorce and family dysfunction are often part of assimilation in many cases.

"When I began working at the factory I noticed that the supervisor was taking the immigrant women to clean the toilets," she said. "They were supposed to be making furniture only. So I asked to see a job description and they told me that I wouldn't have to clean toilets."



Young immigrant children face obstacles in our country

Margaret said that it was only the immigrant women who were made to clean the toilets and the offices.

"They were aware that I was educated when I asked to see a job description," she said. "This type of abuse is very common, as well as sexual abuse. The businessmen usually know which women will be afraid to complain."

Five years ago Margaret started the N.E.E.D.s program (Newcomers Employment and Education Development Services) to help others who have suffered the same hardships. The program was a smashing success. Last year sixty-four immigrants were employed full-time into good jobs. Dozens were taught English, taught mainly by former immigrants who understood the needs of new arrivals. The success of program became widespread news but this past April the program funding was cut by the provincial government.

"Why kill the goose who lays the golden egg?" says Von Lau, "really, it does not make any sense at all."

Von Lau says she has had problems with the government from the start despite the success of the program.

"Most of our clients have told me of the ruse treatment they receive from many government agencies. They treat them more like animals," she says.

In May and June N.E.E.D.s staff were working at the centre on a strictly volunteer basis.

"We will work on bravely for these people," says Von Lau, "but I don't know how long we can last. We are hoping and praying and our fingers are crossed."

(Next month will be the final part of Rodney Graham's series on immigration. He will explore the views of politicians toward immigration and ask whether or not there is a compassionate solution.)

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Joshua - a C-31 child

## Bill C-31 - The Abocide Bill... jumbling people into numbers.

BY LINDA DUMONT

"Like genocide, Bill C-31 refers to the extermination of a people, in this case, the extermination not of Indians per se, but their status as Aboriginal People," says Harry Daniels, president of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples.

Bill C-31, a 1985 amendment to the Indian Act, has been termed "The Abocide Bill", and is seen as just another step in the government's attempt to integrate Aboriginal peoples into mainstream society.

With the signing of the treaties, Aboriginal people were granted Indian status under the provisions of the Old Indian Act. This status ensured them "treaty rights" in exchange for relinquishing their tribal lands. These rights included reserve land, cash, sometimes farm animals and/or equipment, provision for education and the "medicine chest" clause which is interpreted as health care.

Under the Old Indian Act, Indian status was passed down from father to child. Indian women who married non-status men lost their status as did their children, while non-status women who married men with Indian status became status, as

did their children. (Metis peoples received scrip for their land, which meant the land was sold outright and once the scrip was spent there was no more government liability. Metis peoples, however, are seeking more recognition and rights).

"This (the Indian Act) is in direct conflict to the Aboriginal way of life," said Don Ryan, chief negotiator for the Gitksan Nation of B.C.

Bill C-31 has done four things: it provided for reinstatement of persons who lost their status as a result of the provisions of the Old Indian Act, it did away with the patrilineal definition of eligibility for Indian Status, it enabled bands to assume control of band membership lists as long as they adopted a membership code that conforms to the bill, and it allowed bands to deny membership to certain classes of status Indians.

Since the bill was passed, over 115,000 Indian people have obtained status as a direct result of the bill, and more are applying as they search out Aboriginal roots.

However, one effect of the bill is the gradual extinction of status Indians. Children of mixed marriages, where only one person has status, all have C-31 status. Only marriages between people with full Indian Status produce children with full status.

The Indian Act has also created a caste system among Aboriginal people where there are now four classes of "Indians", those with full Indian status, those who lost their status and were reinstated under Bill C-31, those who have status under Bill C-31 because they are children of reinstated women, and those without status.

Most Aboriginal families have members in each category. Within one household, one brother may have status and another could be Bill C-31 while another has no status. Genealogies are important, in that rights are handed down like an inheritance. Because many Aboriginal people have been raised in foster homes or adopted into white families, this inheritance has been lost.

Robin, who works at the Red Road Healing

Centre, is hoping to get status under Bill C-31. Both of her parents were Metis until her dad received his status under Bill C-31. Her uncle also has status, as do all of his children.

"I applied for my status and they said they haven't had time to look at my application," said Robin. That was three years ago.

Robin's son is C-31 because his father has status, but for Robin it's a waiting game.

David Martel was born with full treaty status under the Old Indian Act even though his mother is Scottish, because his father has full Indian status. After his parents divorced, his mother remarried and lost her status so his younger half sister is non-status.

"As a 'white Indian' with red hair," Martel said, "I get harassed by Native people when I use my treaty card and my white card (tax exemption card)."

He gets it both ways, because the group he works with are white and make remarks like, "Oh, we got you your glasses."

Because bands can determine their band membership, they have the option of rejecting or accepting those with status under Bill C-31. This has created a problem where some reinstated women cannot return to their bands, and some reserves would like to accept their C-31 members but don't have the housing.

"The Indian Act and band lists are designed by the government to diminish and eliminate Aboriginal people and to get them off the land," said Ryan. "Bill C-31 is irrelevant. The issue is about citizenship, not band membership."

Ryan said it should be up to the Indian Nations to decide on who is a citizen and who is not, rather than have the issue decided by the federal government putting people on band lists. Being Aboriginal is not something which can be decided by outside forces; it is belonging to a culture which has been handed down through time. ♦

## Troubled Steps to self-discovery.

BY SUNDANCE.

Debbie will be starting school this September. Today Debbie has been clean and sober since March 3, 1998. Debbie began her struggle with alcohol at the age of nine. She grew up around alcohol and witnessed physical abuse in her home. To escape her home life, she married at the age of sixteen. That didn't work out either.

Through her relationships, Debbie has had four children. Her biggest let down in life was to discover that three of her children were being abused by their own father.

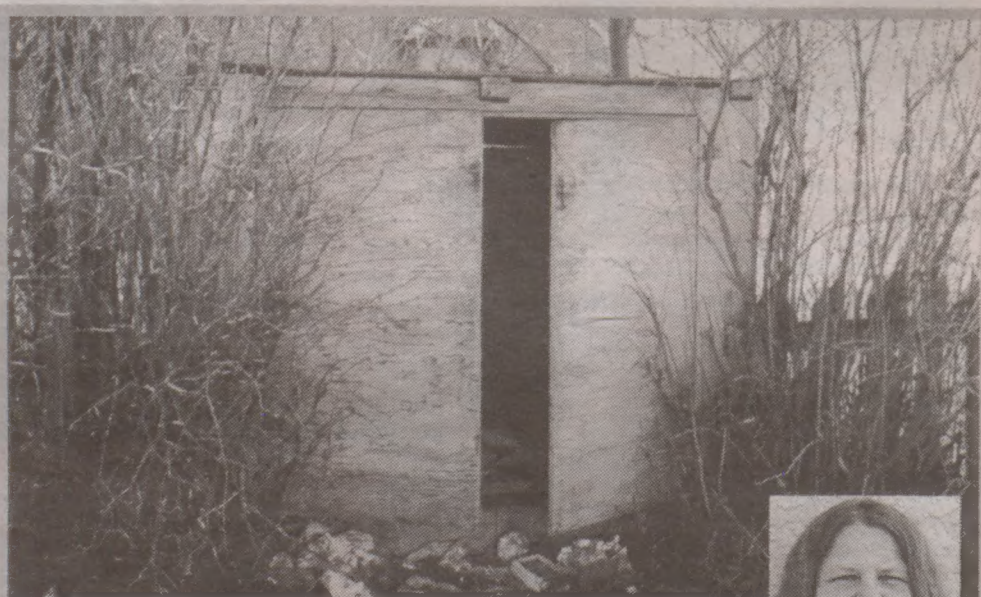
Extremely depressed and withdrawn from her friends and family, Debbie turned to life on the streets. She found the people more understanding and many had similar situations. Trying to forget all the bad things that happened, alcohol and drugs became a diet. The problem increased

rapidly. She stole and worked the streets to pay for her habits that would be anywhere up to \$300 a day.

While living on the streets, Debbie would seek refuge at the George Spady Centre at night, but there wasn't always room. Often she would have to sleep in abandoned homes, bushes, plywood makeshift garbage bins and so on.

"My turning point in life was when I got together with Sundance, an Our Voice vendor," Debbie says. "He too had lived on the streets of this city."

They helped each other to get sober along with the support of Our Voice, the Spady Centre, Boyle Street Co-op and many street friends.



Bottom right, Debbie. Top, Debbie's former shelter.



"I would like to thank the lord and everyone who helped save me from my old self," she said. "Because there is a better person inside of me and I am good stuff, God doesn't make junk!! Today I am very grateful for a place to call home. ♦"





# Samuel and Shirley Shirt Busy with hope and healing

By Michael Walters

I waited for Samuel and Shirley in the lobby of the Stan Daniels Community Correctional Centre. Around me, the facility, a halfway house, is preparing for lunch. The dining room begins to fill with inmates, men who are on the cusp of freedom, people slowly being reintegrated into the air the rest of us breathe.

After a few moments, I see Shirley approaching. She is surrounded by others, all trying to keep up with her. She greets me with a big smile and leads me into the dining hall and puts me in line to get some lunch. I have to hurry because she has to be on her way to another counseling session in a few minutes.

Her and Samuel, her partner, act as elders and provide spiritual counseling to the clients of the centre. It keeps them busy.

Once we've sat down next to Sam, who is busy with his lunch and conversation, my interview is forced into action.

Sam and Shirley, aside from the work they do at Stan Daniels, have for the past seven years lead the Bissell Centre's Wednesday night Healing Circles. They also work along side Bissell Centre staff with children and families who deal with the issue of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome as well as leading a Native Parenting class which is preceded by a healing circle every Friday.

"We also just set the date for our Memorial Round Dance in honour of all the people who have died on the streets of drug and alcohol abuse," Shirley said with pride. "It's happening this October 15&16."

The couple's work keeps their old blue van rumbling down the hot summer asphalt. They visit various native communities through the summer, where they provide guidance for traditional ceremonies and to the people who live there.

"I love doing what we're doing. I love helping people and giving people hope," she said. "I was a hopeless person once in my life and I was given hope. The world condemns too many people. People make mistakes and they're marked forever. We need to help people and forgive them and let them heal. That way we wouldn't have so many people in prisons."

Their task is a daunting one indeed. Things do not appear full of hope for native people these days. According to Aboriginal health studies, more than 80% of native people suffer or have suffered with substance abuse issues. More than 60% have been incarcerated, and most are unemployed for long periods of time. It is a culture still reeling after hundreds of years of displacement and abuse. But it has been hundreds of years. Often we hear that it has been so long since the land was overrun by Europeans, that native people no longer have merit when aiming blame at what happened so long ago.

"Well it doesn't matter that it was 300 years ago," says Shirley. "There are obviously still a lot of people hurting, a lot of people who haven't had the support over the years to be strong, to get over what we're supposed to be getting over. People say the same thing about residential schools."

Then she began to speak personally.

"I went to a residential school and I was abused sexually as many were. A Priest destroyed my spirit. They tried to destroy our culture. They took our language, our hair, everything that made me who I was."

Shirley, like many of the people she and her partner are trying to help now, ended up on the street, drinking and addicted to drugs.

"There was a point out there when I wanted to die. I had no reason to live, but I found the hope in the fear of getting killed. I had to get off the streets. I realised I didn't want to die. I was abused all my life and I had to heal. And for that I thank my native elders. They helped me heal. They were there for me and if it wasn't for them I would be dead."

"And for many people there isn't help. They feel suppressed and stuck in their systems, so they keep drinking. We need to give people hope. That's what I want to accomplish with this work. I want people to find themselves, I want people to find their joy and this is not just about native people. This is about all people who have been hurt and abused."

Shirley then wished me luck and headed off to her next appointment.

I first met Sam when I attended his Wednesday night Healing Circles a couple times last year. In a way it was where I learned of the pain of people who lived on the streets and who were searching hard for hope and the truth in themselves. The circles were an opportunity for anyone to be themselves and to be open. The sharing of the fruit and smoking of the pipe, the smudge ceremony, the cleansing, the purity of the spirit were all symbols of the complete acceptance of the circles. The circles are a very human and spiritual experience. They are a venue of expression and an offering of hope.

Sam's own experiences lend heavily to his wisdom and they influence how he approaches helping others.

"If I could survive the streets, I can survive anything. Street life taught me very good lessons you know," he says. "I had to look to myself. I was blaming my problems on alcohol and drugs. I was blaming everything but myself. I was angry and frustrated, but it had to be me that I looked to. The other things were excuses."

Sam came to Edmonton in the sixties, intending to simply pass through.

"The first place you go is downtown and you get stuck with the people who you know, the people who are already stuck. Then you get stuck. I had to learn the ropes and learn to survive. Then I became a chronic drinker and drug abuser. I was very frustrated and I started lashing out. There's a bitter end to that sometimes. It could be death, or you may kill someone or end up as a cripple."

"Eventually I ended up in the prison system. I was forty-two years old and had nothing to show. It was through the grace of God and through my native spirituality that I started thinking I needed help. I needed to live, not just survive. I told a judge that I needed help with my drinking and he recommended rehab." That was the beginning. I learned that sober meant no drugs or alcohol. Period!

Sam has been sober for more than ten years now and he met Shirley more than eight years ago. Since then their relationship and their work together has become the most important thing in his life.

"She is my best friend. She is always there for me and I try to always be there for her. I believe I've come a long way and I'm very thankful to the Creator and to myself for that."

Sam has become very ill over the years. His cough, like thunder, reveals his chronic lung disease. He is on medication that he dislikes and uses puffers and an oxygen assist through most of the day.

"I get so sick sometimes I think I'll die, but I keep going."

"You know there's so many people coming from the reserves. They're not getting enough help. They are running away. They are looking for a geographical cure and the first thing they find is skid row. They have poor education and come from dysfunctional families."

"I come from a dysfunctional family. My parents were also destroyed by residential schools and they didn't have the skills to be good parents so they couldn't teach us how to be good parents."

The youth are a major concern to Sam and Shirley. They feel young people are the way to break the generations of negative patterns and unhealth.

"We want people to be strong and realise the value of love and caring. This is very important."

Sam is an optimistic man. He has come from a hard life and made it his purpose to help the process of healing that his people desire and need.

"When I was young it was hard to be an Indian. I saw my parents being ridiculed because they were native and I was ridiculed, but things are better now. I think a lot of racism is hidden these days, but it is much better. It makes it easier."

Sam and Shirley, aside from their busy lives of working with their community and their people, are raising their young Grandson Justice.

"We've had him with us since birth. I even cut the cord," Sam beams proudly. "I just hope I live long enough to share my values with him. I hope that I can give him the knowledge that I have. I hope that he understands the importance of love and caring. I think it already shows. That's what I want for all people," he says. ♦





## Street Seen

by Cec Garfin

Rafael is 33 years old, married with a new born baby boy. His jewelry making is a family tradition that goes back 4 or 5 generations in his family in Mexico. His father, two brothers and one sister have a store in Tapachula, Mexico. In addition to bracelets, earrings, necklaces and rings made using copper, silver, and gold, they also make big cooking bowls which they sell to local restaurants.

Rafael came to Canada and to Edmonton in 1996. He has been travelling around the world since he was 17. He was in Europe, Africa, England, France and the USA. In the course of his travels, he would take time to sell his wares on the street at different festivals and he had displays at galleries. Rafael's position in the family business is deemed the traveler, like his grandfather. His father is the business manager, one brother is the hammerer, the other brother is the jewelry maker, his sister is the business promoter and his mother's responsibility is running the house. The family is not wealthy. They live simply with only the basic necessities. Rafael still sends money to his family in Mexico.

All material is brought to Edmonton from Mexico by a family member or Rafael returns home and brings it back himself. The reason it can't be sent here by the postal service is that Tapachula is in rebel territory and the Mexican government has the mail and



and telephone services monitored.

Rafael has a lot of repeat customers, including tourists from many different countries. In the winter his wares are displayed in local galleries. The prices for his jewelry and other items are very reasonable from a low of \$2.00 to an average of \$10.00 to the most expensive being a gold combination jewelry set costing \$250.00. Every item he makes is one of a kind and has a piece of his heart in it. Customers can order specific designs to their liking. The

tools that Rafael uses belonged to his deceased grandfather.

Rafael wants to give special thanks to the city of Edmonton Parks and Recreation Department, City Bylaw Department, to Mr. Barry Sawchuk and Mr. Andrew for giving him the opportunity to set up and run this business in Edmonton. A special thank you to all his customers past and present, for their support. Last, but not least, a big thank you to his wife for sticking with him through the good times and the bad. And lastly he gives thanks to his Virgin of Guadalupe for keeping him healthy and giving him strength and guidance along the path of life. ♦

## National Day of Prayer First Nations trying to heal Winnipeg and Edmonton

Rodney Graham

"I literally began to weep. My heart broke when I saw them standing there. In my heart, I began to pray for them," said Ross Maracle, Mohawk Pastor and Native leader of Desronto, Ontario. He was describing the experience he and his wife had while driving past the low track, which is the area where young hookers work in Winnipeg.

Standing on the street corners were nearly two dozen children, some as young as twelve years old, selling their bodies to passing motorists.

After this incident, Ross Maracle who lives on the Tyendinaga Reserve in Ontario and is director of the television ministry Spirit Alive, decided to organise the National Days of Prayer in Winnipeg.

Native leaders, their congregations, as well as non-native Christians united in three days of prayer at various locations around the city-including the low track- in efforts to effect positive change and seek God's intervention in situations Maracle calls reprehensible.

On the Sagkeping Reserve in Manitoba, in January, there was an average of one suicide per week. "What a way to usher in a new year," says Maracle.

There are more Natives per capita in Winnipeg than any other city in Canada. And Manitoba is the suicide capital of our nation with more Aboriginal youth committing suicide than in any other city.

"There is an average of forty suicides every hundred days across Canada, as Native youth give into the feeling of hopelessness."

"They fill their prisons with Natives, but not their churches," Pastor Maracle says. "My people are being warehoused in prisons. 80% of those in remand in Winnipeg are Native. I recognise injustice, inequity regarding the dealings with my people."

Pastor Maracle is aware that his task is a serious one. In early June a fellow broadcaster, Keith Joseph, of the show Tribal Trails,



Photos by Todd Reczka

committed suicide.

"He was probably overburdened, as I am, the responsibility is enormous. Countless people are calling for help every day.

"Some people tell me to shut-up, to not make waves, but how can you shut-up when someone is drowning?

"In the Christian community we are often too concerned with position, comfort and convenience. This attitude is wrong. We need to have our comfort zone challenged and the message of justice and mercy must go forward. ♦





# Anne lives in her car

Ann has been living in a broken down car illegally parked on a church parking lot. At night, she sleeps in the car. By day, she keeps watch because all her possessions are inside, and broken windows make it impossible to lock up. Even so, she has had a bag of clothing stolen from the front seat.

She is one of the tens of thousands of Albertans no longer collecting social services. In her 40s, Ann is diabetic. She was cut off social assistance last month for an infraction. Since life on social assistance is lived on a month to month basis, loss of even one check means eviction. Even an individual superbly apt at money management couldn't save for a rainy day because having money in the bank makes you no longer in need of assistance.

For many just being eligible for social assistance has proved prohibitive. They can't get through the red tape, can't face the prospect of jumping through the hoops to get assistance, or they have been denied assistance for any number of reasons.

The statistics look good with the number of people on welfare in Alberta reduced drastically. What the stats don't tell us is that, according to provincial research, hardly any of the people no longer collecting welfare have found employment.

Ann eats at soup lines and drop-ins, and washes up at the Bissell Centre. She keeps herself clean, and dresses smartly.

She has been told she can get back on social

assistance when she finds another address. Without a signed rent confirmation, there is no proof that she is a resident of Edmonton, so she is not eligible for benefits. Living in a parked car does not meet residency requirements.

Theresa is staying with a friend while looking for an apartment. She graduated from Grant MacEwan College on April 24 with certification as a Mental Health Practitioner.

For Theresa, this is a second career. She has a degree in social work, and has worked most of

rent confirmation, she doesn't qualify for social assistance.

Norma is not even attempting to go on welfare. She graduated from Grant MacEwan College on April 24 with a certificate in Voluntary Sector Management. She's determined to find employment.

Norma had to go on welfare four years ago due to marriage breakdown. Having been a housewife who helped her husband with his business, she was left with no employment history and was unable to find a job.

Norma worked for six months under an Alberta Community Employment Grant which pays wages for non-profit organisations to hire people who are on assistance. She then qualified for Employment Insurance for another six months. Still unable to find a job, she took out a student loan to attend college.

Now a college graduate, Norma is determined not to go back on assistance. She said she can't face the feeling of being a non-person that comes from jumping through the hoops to collect \$394 a month. Instead, she is surviving on "pennies from heaven" getting money from a church benevolent fund, family and friends. Her days are spent dropping off resumes and following leads on jobs, but she is getting discouraged.

The longer she is unemployed, the more difficult life becomes. She needs dental work, her glasses have to be fixed, and clothes wear out. To top things off, her student loan repayment is coming due.

"I'm just praying I'll find a job soon," said Norma. But the rejection slips are piling up.

The misconception of women in need is that of the woman on the street, homeless due to addictions or other vices, or the young mother with too many babies. But for many, like Ann, Theresa and Norma, homelessness is due to one single factor - lack of employment. ♦



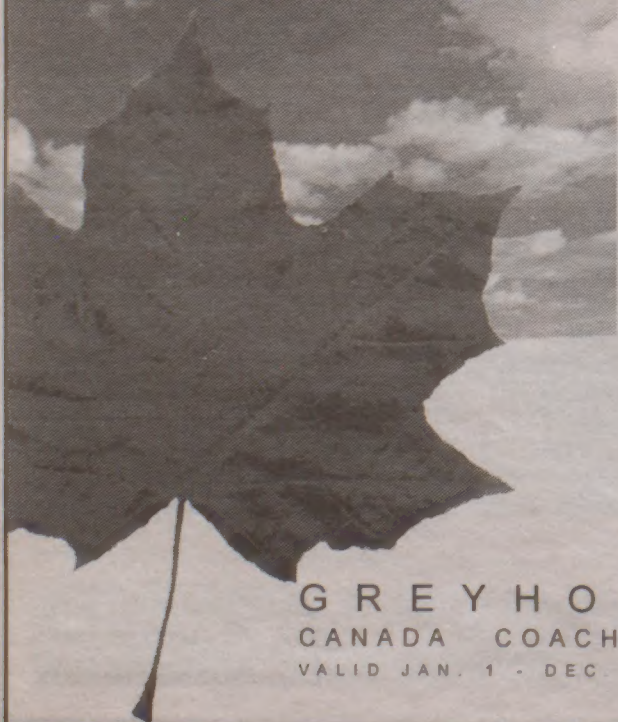
BY LINDA DUMONT

her life. When she speaks, she is polite and professional. Now over 40 and also diabetic, she is attempting to start over again, but she needs time to find employment.

Her last student finance check was sent out the beginning of March. It covered April expenses, but she was evicted May 14 for not being able to pay rent.

Theresa put her belongings in storage, applied for social assistance and started apartment hunting. She's finding it difficult to find a place that will accept her because she can't pay a damage deposit up front. Until she secures that signed

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# Finding the Creator at the Edmonton Native Healing Centre

by John Zapantis

When broken hearts and lost souls come looking for spiritual direction, the Creator welcomes them with open arms at the Edmonton Native Healing Centre.

The Edmonton Native Healing Centre is a non-profit organisation that works in conjunction with the Christian Reformed Church (CRC). The Centre was originally established in 1992.

The Centre conducts a spiritual healing circle every Monday afternoon from 4-5 p.m.

Aboriginal people who have experienced an array of problems including substance abuse, physical, emotional and mental abuse take part in the mixed healing circles.

The mixed circles usually consist of 4 to 10 people who all depend on the spiritual guidance of an aboriginal elder.

All participants in the circle take part in a smudge prayer and passing of the pipe ceremony. It is a ceremony that purifies the mind, body and soul.

The circle's participants are also involved in a story session. They share their joy, grief and personal struggles. This is a way of gradually ridding themselves of their burdens and strengthening their spiritual beliefs as the journey toward healing begins.

Pastor John Stellingwerff is the Director and Office Administrator at the centre. He plays an integral role in providing spiritual support and is concerned with helping lost Aboriginal souls integrate back into native culture.

"We promise holistic healing, but our primary

Pastor John realises how important it is to see Native people integrate back into the mainstream of Native Culture and spirituality.

"So we work with a lot of Native people who come in here with low self-esteem and no confidence. What we try to do is help Native people to reconnect with their culture and their spiritual traditions. Ultimately to come with God their Creator."

Charlotte Ferris has been working as a volunteer kitchen supervisor for three years. She is a Metis Elder who has had the good grace to support those who come looking for the Creator.

"The greatest satisfaction I get is spiritual and talking to people and showing them the way to get into life," she says.

Marion Sinclair is the Healing Centre's Assistant Administrator and Program Coordinator. She's responsible for scheduling the variety of essential social programs.



Left to right: Marion Sinclair, Charlotte Ferris, and Pastor John Stellingwerff. Photo by John Zapantis

focus is spiritual healing. The native people have struggled tremendously in this country because of the loss of their culture."

Pastor John is familiar with the CRC's earlier involvement with Aboriginal healing centres dating back to the 1970s. He says that the CRC has been deprived Native people of their traditional cultural values.

"Unfortunately the churches played a large part in that through the residential school system. Through dominant white society, Native people were told their culture was no good, that their language was no good. If you tell people these kinds of things long enough, which is what happened, you're actually teaching self-hatred."

"One of my strong points is being an advocate for the native people. I say that because I've experienced some of the problems that many of my people have experienced here. Because of this I feel I can help them lead a better life for themselves and their families. I want to help them build some self-esteem."

If you'd like to find out more about the variety of social programs available at the Edmonton Native Healing Centre contact Pastor John Stellingwerff or Marion Sinclair at 482-5522. Office hours are 9-4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday. They are located at #204-11813-123 Street in Edmonton. ♦

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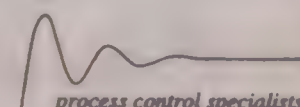
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# POEMS

## Uncry me undone

by Michael Flowercloud

Burn this blood from my body  
and smell my fears,  
reticent of the wildflowers of my soul.

Re-excite me, redefine me and watch me whither  
and choke on your roots,  
watch me quiver in the death of my soul.

Servile reminders strengthen your wishes,  
give you accordance to show me your sweetness,  
mark you purchased and on track...

though as rain falls fast  
upon the beauty of undesired gold,  
it is my uncried tears that will wash me from you.

## Spring is here.

by Betty Nordin

As I walk through the streets,  
I see the remnants of winter all around.  
Soiled dirty garments  
lie all over the back alleys, parking lots, drive-  
ways,  
in the parks.  
There is garbage all over the place.  
Condoms, broken bottles, rags, you name it,  
all over the place.  
My isn't spring beautiful.

## Burnt Out

by E. J. J. J.

Burnt out, merely existing,  
standing at the bottom of nowhere.  
Mind blown, empty of thought, forlornly wondering,  
did I once belong somewhere.

Burnt out, due to my addiction to alcohol-to coke-and pills!  
Lost to who I am.  
Trying to think.  
There's nothing there.  
seems my brain is on the lam.

Burnt out, how could it be?  
I must have been someone at one time.  
Words run through my mind, that to me,  
make no sense or rhyme.

Burnt out, not belonging, merely existing.  
A non-entity!  
Burnt out, alone, I seem to be no more-  
a shell is all people see.

Burnt out....



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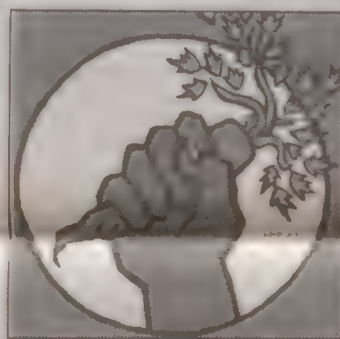
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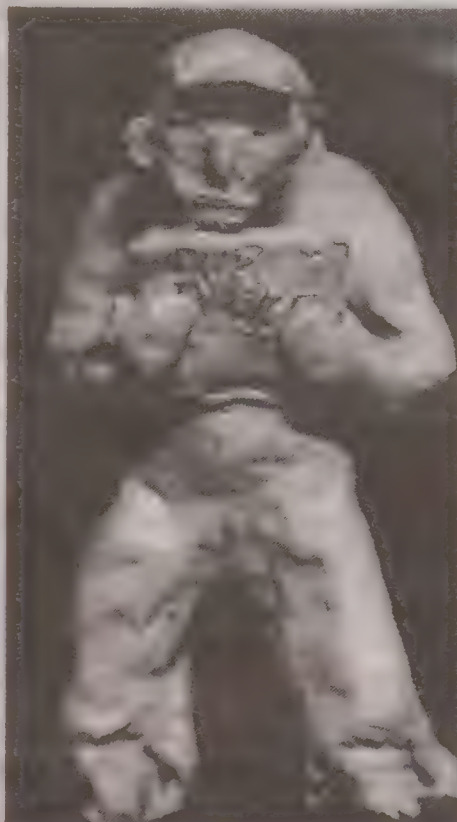
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# Fighting the Odds

NEW  
FICTION  
PART SIX

By Allison Kydd

(Last month, Hope Morrisey, with the help of her children, convinces two social workers that her little family is functioning just fine. Nonetheless, it was a shocking experience to have them check up on her, to feel that vulnerable.)

Sure enough, just as Hope was feeling safer, when she was starting to ease up and think about having fun for a change, things fell apart. It started when she came under the spell of a pair of blue eyes, a teasing voice and a crooked nose.

All these fascinating parts belonged to a man named Donald, and she met him quite innocently, at work. She'd always remember that day, though it'd started badly. First, she was thirty minutes late. In fact, she was lucky to get to work at all.

At breakfast, Shelagh said her tummy was sick, and Hope spent an hour trying to decide what that meant. If her baby was sick, Hope must miss work, for there was no question of finding a baby-sitter, not at the last minute, not that she could afford one, anyway.

It wouldn't be the only day she'd missed because of sick children. Just two weeks ago, Gareth had been throwing up most of one night, so she'd sent the girls off to school on their own and spent the day at home with her son.

Hope knew Gareth didn't get enough of her attention. It came with being the oldest child. Besides that, she expected too much of him. So it was a treat to be able to focus on him alone. Just one day seemed to make all the difference. He was back to being his intense, over-responsible self by the next.

When they got home from school the day he was sick, the girls expressed their envy in no uncertain terms.

"You don't even look sick," said Margie when she found Gareth and their mother sitting cross-legged on the shag rug in the living-room, playing a rousing game of double solitaire. "Bet you were just pretending. It's not fair!"

Gareth, for once, resisted calling his sister a whiner--he'd learned that one from his father, who said whining was a permanent female condition. Instead, he smirked at Hope as if they were conspirators. Margie picked up on that look and flounced upstairs in a worse mood.

Shelagh could flounce with the best of them, but she was anxious not to miss the fun, so she contented

herself with echoing Margie's "not fair." Looking back, Hope knew she might have picked up whatever "bug" had laid her brother low.

Fortunately, Shelagh was cured of her copy-cat stomach ache when Margie reminded her the nursery school was going swimming. By that time, however, Hope and the others were already twenty minutes late. That'd teach her to reward them for being sick. Of course, it was easy to do, since she had no resources to reward them other ways.

When Hope made it to work, Stephen at the order desk raised his eyebrows and nodded significantly toward the stairs. The manager's office, of course. Hope sighed. Obviously something had been said. Might as well get it over with.

It wasn't the first time Claire Thomas was less than sympathetic to her predicament.

"I count on you being on time," she said. "If you aren't, there's extra work for everybody, especially at opening time. And I should think you'd care more about your employment record."

Hope found it hard to meet Claire's eyes. The other woman made her feel as if she was irresponsible or reckless, though she knew she wasn't. This when she'd always felt a woman should be supportive. But it was useless to explain or defend herself against Claire.

"I'm sorry," she said. Her voice sounded flat and unconvincing.

"I hope so," said Claire. "It's a question of attitude. You told me you planned to take this job seriously."

"Oh, I did. I do," Hope hastened to say. She couldn't help thinking that Claire Thomas knew very little about parenting--not having children herself--and especially not about single-parenting.

Claire returned to a favourite theme: "Everyone has problems, you know. You're not the only one."

"Yes, I know. I'm sorry. I won't let it happen again."

"You said that last time."

"I know . . ."

"It's for your own good. In your next job, you might not find your boss so easy-going."

Next job? What did that mean? Was it a threat? And "easy-going"! Imagine Claire saying that with a straight face.

When Hope went back upstairs, Stephen raised his eyebrows again. It was the most they dared communicate, since Claire was in the habit of sneaking up on

people, and she didn't have a sense of humour about herself.

It was just then that the blue-eyed, dark-haired man walked in and strode right over to Hope. Naturally, she blushed as she asked how she could help him. It wasn't only the way he smiled at her, though, that made her blush--whenever male customers teased her or looked at her in a certain way, she blushed--it was more than that. It was the way he'd appeared just as she was fantasizing someone would appear, someone who would help her take on all her dragons.

"Thomas Mann," he said, "what do you have of Thomas Mann? The book I really want is Joseph and His Brothers. But I'd be interested in seeing anything you have."

That's when Hope noticed that his shapely nose was a little crooked, not exactly off-centre, not regular either, but pleasing.

"Is it theology?" Hope asked, taking a wild guess as she pulled her gaze away from his face and looked at the computer screen.

"Lord, no," he grinned again, "I'm no theologian. I just want a good read."

By then, Hope had found they had no record of the title. She hated to come up with nothing better, didn't want him to leave, imagined them walking out the front door together. Would he smile down at her? Link his arm with hers?

"Joseph and His Brothers appears to be out of print," she said, smiling to soften the blow.

Suddenly, Claire was at her elbow.

"Where have you checked?" she said sharply to Hope. "Don't give up so easily." She turned a gleaming smile on the man with the blue eyes and crooked nose. "May I help you, sir?" she asked in the honied tone she reserved for her favourite customers.

"I'm being helped already, thank you," said the man, still looking at Hope.

"As a matter of fact," he continued, "I'd heard the book was out of print. I've put you to a lot of trouble for nothing. Tell you what, my name is Donald. I'll be back when I have more time and we'll find which of Mann's titles are available. Whom should I ask for?"

His eyes dropped to the name tag pinned to her breast pocket. She blushed some more.

"Hope," he said, "what a pretty name." ♦

(to be continued)



## JOHN'S STYLE FILE

# The C-Men and the Raging Blues Band

John Zapantis  
Our Voice vendor, writer and  
photographer meets the most  
interesting people.



Kram Bozuk and Cnarf Evorg with Our Voice vendor Churchill Wahweaye

The letter "C" best explains what C-Men and the Raging Blues are all about.

"C is for concept. C is for caring. C is for community. C is for many things that we really believe in with this project. Mainly it's conception. It's a concept band," says Franc Grove. Franc is one of the lead vocalists of C-Men and the Raging Blues.

C-Men and the Raging Blues are three multi-talented musicians.

Frank Grove -aka Cnarf Evorg, Mark Kozub-aka Kram Buzok and brother Mike Kozub-Ekim Buzok.

The C-Men were officially established in December of 1997.

The C-Men, a party fringe band, are morally involved in the fight to raise money for favourite Edmonton charities here in Edmonton.

The C-Men are officially recognised as the house band of **Our Voice**, the spare change magazine.

The status as official house band was earned when the band previously performed at the first annual Spare Change Sale-A-Thon back in April of 1995.

Recently the C-Men wrote and composed a number of songs that they recorded on a double C.D. album entitled "Hurtin' and Spurtin'!"

"Hurtin' and Spurtin'!" was produced by Beeftown records, which is their recording label. Beeftown Recording is located in Ellerslie, Alberta.

The many songs on the album are significant to the many people who have been hit tragically by an array of personal and social issues.

Musical topics include incest, sexual abuse and other issues of psychological and social significance.

C-Men band member Franc Grove-aka Cnarf Evorg says, "Hurtin' and Spurtin'!" was very much a personal voyage into some of our dark corners, for both Mark and myself. We want to try to get into the person that experiences that and relate that experience.

People don't like talking about the dark side of life. We like talking about it but in a tongue in cheek kind of way."

Franc speaks proudly while honouring the integral

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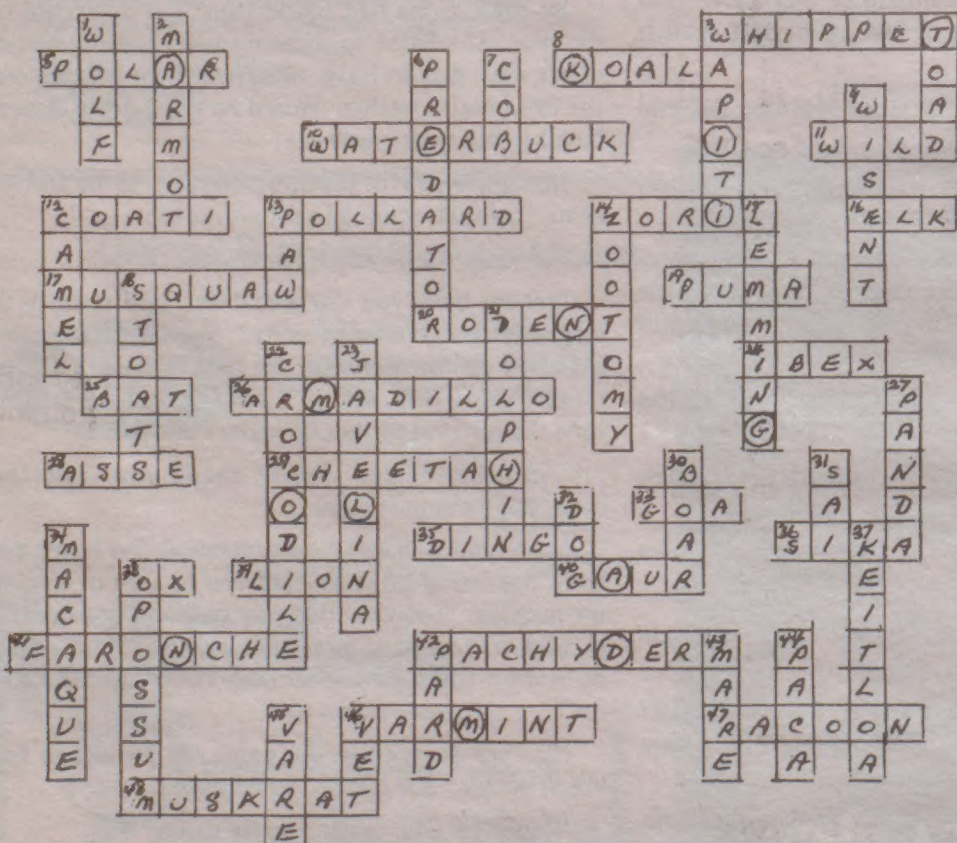
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role **Our Voice**, the spare change magazine plays in the community.

Franc says "Love the magazine, love the concept of truly freelance grassroots writers doing something and showing there view of society. Because everybody has talent you know."

To obtain your copy of the underground double C.D. release entitled "Hurtin' and Spurtin'!" contact Cnarf Evorg call 1-(780) 490-1414. C-Men and the Raging Blues c/o 9925-80 avenue, Edmonton AB. T6E 1T2. ♦

This will be the last John's Style File. John would like to thank all of those who he had the good incentive to interview for his series. John will be breaking new ground beginning next month with new column entitled the "The People's Columnist!" which will feature a variety of subject matter such as personal opinions and people stories.



Answers to June puzzle  
THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

## Notice to Welfare Recipients.

If you have had your income tax rate deducted from either your SFI or AISH, you may wish to appeal to try and have it returned to you.

The Citizens Appeal Panel of Family and Social Services has recently ruled that an Income rebate NOT larger than assets allowed should not be deducted. If you need assistance in this matter or require further information please call The Philia Advocacy Group at 425-1472.

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IN EDMONTON

# Debbie

by Sundance

Debbie has been selling **Our Voice** for two years.

She enjoys meeting the people who take the time to purchase the magazine and to make conversation. She appreciates the kindness and generosity people show.

"It's because of these people that I can say that I have a job selling **Our Voice**," says Debbie.

Debbie is currently on medical benefits and selling **Our Voice** helps her pay her bills, and will help her buy books and clothing for her return to school this fall.

Debbie can be found selling **Our Voice** at the blue bank on 101 street and Jasper avenue, in front of Edmonton Centre, 100 street and 102 avenue and on week-ends in front of the green bank on 117 street and Jasper avenue. ♦



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## CITIZEN OF THE MONTH



## Merl Brown

by Cec Garfin

Merl started as a volunteer at Edmonton Emergency Relief Services three years ago. He originally was only going to work for 3 months, but has enjoyed the work and the people he works with so much he carries on. His responsibilities include furniture pick up, client intake and inventory control.

Merl is 41 years old. He was born in Saskatoon. He is married with four children. He supports his family by offering inexpensive moving to people living on low income. He is also known as the Wire Man. He uses copper wire to make birds, flowers and figurines and can be found making and selling his wares on Whyte Avenue next to the Commercial Hotel. Merl's volunteer work is his way of giving back to society. It makes him feel good, as most of his life he has been a taker. Keeping busy is especially important these days as it keeps his mind off of the pain from his permanent medical condition. ♦

## Café Mosaics

**Our Voice Magazine  
and Café Mosaics'  
Citizen of the Month**

EVERY MONTH in **Our Voice**, we will be featuring someone who has gone the extra kilometre in their lives or in their careers to make a difference in the lives of those who are less fortunate.

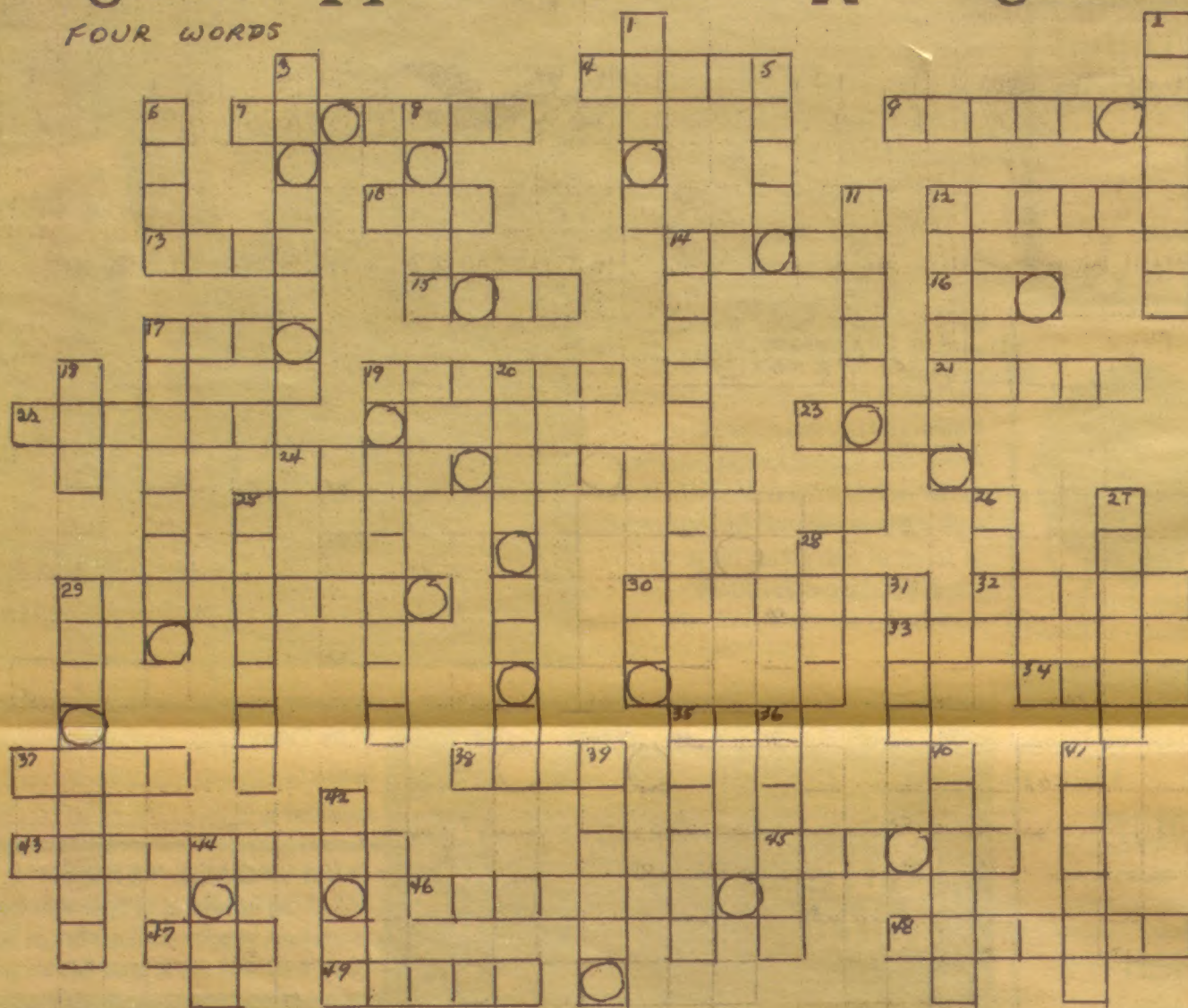
The Citizen of the Month will receive a dinner for two courtesy of the Garneau Café Mosaics on Whyte Avenue.



# HAPPY PAGE

## Susan's Handscratched Word Sizzler

FOUR WORDS



### ACROSS

- 4 Aves
- 7 Bird
- 9 Cape pigeon
- 10 S. Amer. parrot
- 12 Dove
- 13 Songbird
- 14 Eagle's nest
- 15 Bird domicile
- 16 Beak
- 17 Aviary
- 19 Ani, Koel
- 21 Wing Part
- 22 Kea
- 23 Apteryx
- 24 Smallest bird
- 29 Fishing bird
- 30 Fastest running bird
- 32 Davit
- 33 Bacalao bird
- 34 Diving bird
- 35 Stocky bird
- 37 Extinct bird
- 38 Smartest bird
- 43 Game bird
- 45 Fishing hawk
- 46 Young bird
- 47 Small bird
- 48 June bird
- 49 Claw

### DOWN

- 1 Valued duck
- 2 Arabian bird
- 3 Small parrot
- 5 European falcon
- 6 Water bird
- 8 Aquatic bird
- 11 Largest canary
- 12 Certain duck
- 14 Greatest wingspan
- 17 S. Amer. Hawk
- 18 Blackbird
- 19 Bell bird
- 20 Halcyon
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- 28 Bird of prey
- 29 Most dangerous bird
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- 41 A wing
- 42 Aigrette
- 42 Wading bird

Answers in next month's issue

### SOUPLINE BOB



### THINSTICK FAMILY

